

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9195

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 1622

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, CY, TU, OVIP (CLIFFORD, CLARK M.)

SUBJECT: CLIFFORD MISSION: COURTESY CALLS ON PRIME MINISTER
AND PRESIDENT

REF: ATHENS 1581

1. IN COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER AT 6:30 ON
EVENING OF ARRIVAL, DURING WHICH AMBASSADOR, NIMETZ, LEDSKY,
TREVERTON AND MILLS WERE ALSO PRESENT, SECRETARY CLIFFORD
EXTENDED PRESIDENT CARTER'S WARM FELICITATIONS TO CARAMANLIS
AND TOLD HIM OF GREAT IMPORTANCE WHICH PRESIDENT ATTACHES
TO THIS MISSION. CLIFFORD SAID PRESIDENT HAD SENT HIM TO
EXPLORE VIEWS AND ATTITUDES OF LEADERS IN THREE CAPITALS,
GET THEIR EVALUATIONS OF PROBLEMS OF AREA, THE SOLUTION
OF WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT TO US ALL, AND MAKE INDEPENDENT
ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION WITH AN EYE TO HELPING FIND RESO-
LUTION OF DIFFICULTIES AND RESTORING STABILITY. CLIFFORD
EMPHASIZED HIS PERSONAL PLEASURE AT BEING ASKED TO UNDER-
TAKE THIS MISSION, REMINDING CARAMANLIS THAT THRITY
YEARS AGO HE HAD WORKED WITH PRESIDENT TRUMAN TO
FORMULATE TRUMAN DOCTRINE WHICH HAD MADE SUCH A CONTRI-
BUTION TO SECURITY, STABILITY AND PROSPERITY IN THIS
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PART OF WORLD. HE PROMISED TO LISTEN CAREFULLY AND
REPORT FAITHFULLY TO PRESIDENT CARTER WHAT HE LEARNS
SO THAT THESE VIEWS MAY AID HIM IN DEFINING THE COURSE
OF US ACTION.

2. IN RESPONSE, PRIME MINISTER TOLD CLIFFORD HIS
PRESENCE WAS CLEAR INDICATIONS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S

INTENTION TO FIND FAIR AND ENDURING SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS OF REGION. WHILE IT WAS NOT FOR CARAMANLIS TO SAY HOW US POLICY SHOULD BE RESHAPED, FACT THAT ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO DO SO IS SOURCE OF HOPE TO HIM. CARAMANLIS PROMISED TO ASSIST CLIFFORD AND USG INFINDING OBJECTIVE AND JUST SOLUTIONS TO THESE PERPLEXING PROBLEMS AND HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT AT END OF MISSION TO GREECE CLIFFORD WOULD BE CONVINCED THAT GOG IS MODERATE AND FAIR IN WHAT IT ADVOCATES. CARAMANLIS EXPRESSED CERTAINTY THAT VISIT WOULD BE STARTING POINT FOR WARMER AND EXPANDING BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES. WHILE HE DID NOT WISH TO CRITICIZE SOMEONE WHO WAS NOT PRESENT TO DEFEND HIMSELF, CARAMANLIS SAID HE HAD TO AGREE WITH DR. KISSINGER'S OWN ADMISSION THAT HIS BIGGEST MISTAKE HAD BEEN HANDLING OF CYPRUS CRISIS. WITH ADVENT OF NEW ADMINISTRATION, CARAMANLIS BELIEVED THERE WOULD BE A FRESH OPPORTUNITY TO FIND MUTUALLY ACCEPTEABLE RESOLUTION OF THESE TROUBLES.

3. SECRETARY AND SAME GROUP NEXT PAID CALL ON PRESIDENT TSATSOS AT 7:00 O'CLOCK. IN PRESENCE OF TELEVISION AND STILL PHOTOGRAPHERS, CLIFFORD HANDED TSATSOS, PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER OF GREETING AND VERBALLY EXTENDED HIS WARM WISHES. ADFTER PRESS LEFT CLIFFORD REPEATED MUCH THAT HE HAD SAID TO CARAMANLIS AND ADDED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER ATTACHES UNUSUAL SIGNIFICANCE TO OUR RELATIONS WITH GREECE AND OTHER NATIONS OF EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. HE RECOGNIZES THAT AS A NEW CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESIDENT HE HAS MUCH TO LEARN AND CLIFFORD MISSION IS PART OF LEARNING PROCESS. CLIFFORD SAID HE WANTED TO EVALUATE PERSONALLY THE ATTITUDES OF LEAERS HE WOULD MEET AND FIND OUT HOW THEY THOUGH US COULD BE HELPFUL IN RESOLVING THEIR PROBLEMS. GREEKS CAN BE PROUD, HE SAID, OF MANNER IN WHICH THEIR COUNTRY HAD EMERGED FROM DIFFICULT POLITICAL SITUATION OF SEVERAL YEARS AGO, THANKS LARGELY TO SKILL AND EXPERIENCE OF CARAMANLIS.

4. TSATSOS EXPRESSED DEEP APPRECIATION BOTH FOR VISIT OF CLIFFORD MISSION AND FOR HIS KIND REMARKS. HE AGREED THAT PRESENT FAVORABLE OUTLOOK FOR GREECE WAS DUE TO PRIME MINISTER'S SKILL AND TO BALANCED POLICY WHICH REFLECTED ANCIENT GREEKRULE OF MODERATION IN ALL THINGS. GOG BELIEVED THIS APPROACH SHOULD BE APPLIED TO PROBLEMS OF REGION BUT POINTED OUT DIFFICULTY OF HAVING REALISTIC NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURKEY BECAUSE, HE SAID, NO INDIVIDUAL THERE CAN SPEAK FOR COUNTRY

AS A WHOLE OR MAKE DIFFICULT DECISIONS. TURKISH
LEADERS SEEM BENT ON REVERSING COOPERATIVE POLICIES
OF ATTATURK, AND THEY SEEM TO BE EMBARKING ON A WAVE
OF EXPANSIONISM AND FANATICISM. TSATSOS SINGLED OUT
GENERAL SANCAR AS A SERIOUS MAN WHO COULD BE DEALT
WITH AND ONE WHO IS LESS EXTREME THAN TURKISH
POLITICIANS.

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